

PRIMARY SOURCES FOR FLYING HOSPITAL INTERPRETERS—MEDICAL, NURSING, CAMP SANITATION, & FLYING HOSPITAL CONSTRUCTION

Albigeance Waldo, "Valley Forge, 1777-1778. Diary of Surgeon Albigeance Waldo, of the Connecticut Line," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 21, no. 3 (1897): 299-323. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20085750>.

"From a Committee to Inspect Beef, 20 December 1777," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-12-02-0588>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 12, 26 October 1777–25 December 1777, ed. Frank E. Grizzard, Jr. and David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2002, pp. 648–649.]

"From George Washington to Henry Laurens, 23 December 1777," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-12-02-0628>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 12, 26 October 1777–25 December 1777, ed. Frank E. Grizzard, Jr. and David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2002, pp. 683–687.]

"To George Washington from Benjamin Rush, 26 December 1777," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0006>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 7–9.]

"General Orders, 26 December 1777," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0001>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 1–2.]

"The sick in Regiments are by no means Provided for, as they ought to be; and the Trifle of small Comforts provided for the Men, it is said, are commonly used by the Surgeons, to the great injury of the Sick: Each Regt ought to be furnished with a Hutt in Winter, and a large Hospital Tent in Summer, and no more of the Sick sent to Hospitals than cannot be avoided, as their Distance from the Regiments, affords great opportunity for unnecessary absence from Camp, & finally Desertion."¹

"General Orders, 1 January 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0082>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, p. 94.]

"Every monday morning the surgeons of Regiments are to make returns to the surgeon General or in his absence to one of the senior-surgeons present in Camp of all the sick in Camp or otherwise under the immediate Care of the Regimental Surgeons, specifying the men's names, companies Regiments and Diseases."²

"And Asist in Clothing their Troops as other (States) have done which prevents Desertions & Save many Usefu(l Lives.)"³

¹ "Colonel Daniel Brodhead to Lieutenant Colonel Tench Tilghman, 30 December 1777," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0057>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 59–63.]

² "General Orders, 2 January 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0092>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 109–110.]

"The General in riding thro' the Incampment, observing that many huts were covered with tents whilst Chimneys were building to others, again repeats his Orders to have the Tents delivered up the moment the Huts are, or can be completed: for the doing of which will allow only this week. And he expects from the General Officers commanding the Wings and the second Line that they will put this into a train of execution & see that the order is complied with. [...]"

The Regimental Surgeons are immediately to make returns to Doctr Cochran the surgeon General of all the men in their Regts who have not had the small pox: They will also call on Doctr Cochran for what sulphur they need for the use of their Regimts."⁴

"Being also informed that many men are render'd unfit for duty by the Itch, He orders & directs the Regimentl Surgeons to look attentively into this matter & as soon as the men (who are infected with this disorder) are properly disposed in huts, to have them annoited for it."⁵

"General Orders, 9 January 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0151>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 185–186.]

"General Orders, 13 January 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0180>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 214–216.]

"General Orders, 15 January 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0203>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 243–246.]

"The Regimental Surgeons are every Wednesday and Saturday Are to make Returns to the Brigadier of all the Sick in their Respective Regts. They will apply to the Brigade Major for a Form. They or their Mates are duly to attend the Huts of their Men and see that the sick are provided for as well as possible, If any thing is wanting the Officer, Commanding the Regts are to be acquainted therewith as Quick as possible who is to spare no pains for the help of the sick untill they can be sent to the Hospl. The hours of which this duty will be attended too are at roll Call in the morning – Noon – 3 oClock in the evening and at Tattoo any Surgeon or mate failing in this duty to be reported by the Commanding Officer of the Regt to which he belongs to the Brigadier. The Surgeons are Also to keep a Book in which they will enter a Copy of Every Return they give in [...]"⁶

³ "From George Washington to Brigadier General Lachlan McIntosh, 5 January 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0120>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, p. 149.]

⁴ "General Orders, 6 January 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0125>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 158–160.]

⁵ "General Orders, 8 January 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0138>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 171–172.]

⁶ George Weedon, "20 January 1778," *Orderly book of General George Weedon*, 199. Web. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/loc.ark:/13960/t7vm51z30>.

“General Orders, 21 January 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0261>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 301–303.]

“It being impossible for the Surgs. of the Flying Hospitals to make effectual provision for the Sick out of Camp Unless they are sent to the places by them appointed and furnished for the purpose All Officers and Regimental Surgeons, when any of their Core (sic) are proper subjects for the Hospital are therefore Immediately to apply to the chief Surgeon of the Flying Hospitals present in Camp and take his direction where to Send the Sick, A Contrary practice have been attended with great Inconveniency and probably Occasions the Death of many men, many has been sent to the Hospl. already Crowded with Patients or to places where no provisions have been made for the Sick and in order that the sick which shall from time to time remain in Camp as well as others before they are sent to the Hospls. may be properly taken care of, The Director Genl. of Hospls. is as soon as possible to furnish the R Mental Surgeons with Medicine Chests supplied with such Medicine as necessary for the Sick in Camp.”⁷

“From George Washington to Lieutenant Colonel William Stephens Smith, 27 January 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0326>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 368–369.]

“The Commanding Officers of each Regt. in Generals Weedons and Muhlenbergs Brigades are to appoint an orderly Officer to visit the sick of the Regt. dailey and to report how they find them also to examine the Condition of the Well, to give directions respecting their Cooking and cleaning their hutts, these reports to be made in writing to the Commanding Officer of the Regt. to be kept by him ready to be produced whenever called upon”⁸

“From George Washington to a Continental Congress Camp Committee, 29 January 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0335>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 376–409.]

“General Orders, 29 January 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0334>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, p. 376.]

“The Commissary General is, if possible to keep the Camp well supplied with rice for the use of the sick; if rice cannot be had, Indian meal is to be provided in it's place; and as this is an article that can at all times and under all circumstances be had no excuse will be admitted for the neglect.
[...]

The regimental Surgeons are desired to be more punctual in making returns of their sick to the Chief Surgeon of the flying Hospital present on every Monday.”⁹

⁷ George Weedon, “21 January 1778,” *Orderly book of General George Weedon*, 204. Web. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/loc.ark:/13960/t7vm51z30>.

⁸ George Weedon, “28 January 1778,” *Orderly book of General George Weedon*, 214-15. Web. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/loc.ark:/13960/t7vm51z30>.

⁹ “General Orders, 22 February 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0542>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 637–639.]

"The Qr. Masters of the different Regts. of Genl. Weedon's Brigade to see that the Vaults of their Respective Regts. to which they belong are filled up and new ones dug the Brigade Qr. master to See that this order is put in Execution— The Officers Commanding Regiments in the Brigade are requested to give most positive orders that the men belonging to their different Corps do not ease themselves about the Camp but go to the Vaults otherwise the Camp will be unsufferable from the Stench when the warm weather comes on and very prejudicial to the health of the Soldiery—"10

"Colonel Stewart has been much surprised to find so little attention paid to the orders Issued by Genl. Weedon, respecting the Sick of the Brigade. The Colonel now positively orders the Captain whose duty it is to visit the Sick of the Brigade to deliver in his report by 9 o'clock the following morning to which he was appointed to the above duty, otherwise they may depend upon being called to a Severe Account as it is a duty the utmost importance in the Army."11

"Instructions to Officers Superintending Hospitals, 28 February 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0595>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 696–697.]

"General Orders, 13 March 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0132>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, pp. 166–167.]

"A party of 1 Sub. Q. Serjt. 2 Corporals & 20 Privates to be paraded this Mornng. At 11 oClock, the men to be under the Direction of Mr Trent, Brigade Q Master who is to see all the filth & nastiness in front of the Brigade is cleared away and covered, and the old Vaults be filled up & new ones dug. The sub to see the men do their Duty.— This party to be paraded every Mornng., for the Time of Troop beating, Untill Mr. Trent informs the Business for which they were taken out is finished"12

"General Orders, 18 March 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0183>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, p. 215.]

"General Orders, 19 March 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0194>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, pp. 222–223.]

"General Orders, 7 April 1778," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0399>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, pp. 418–419.]

¹⁰ George Weedon, "26 February 1778," *Orderly book of General George Weedon*, 242–43. Web. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/loc.ark:/13960/t7vm51z30>.

¹¹ George Weedon, "27 February 1778," *Orderly book of General George Weedon*, 243. Web. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/loc.ark:/13960/t7vm51z30>.

¹² George Weedon, "14 March 1778," *Orderly book of General George Weedon*, 256. Web. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/loc.ark:/13960/t7vm51z30>.

“General Orders, 8 April 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0402>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, pp. 421–422.]

“General Orders, 9 April 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0411>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, p. 431.]

“General Orders, 10 April 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0423>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, pp. 447–448.]

“General Orders, 14 April 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0469>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, pp. 508–509.]

“General Orders, 20 April 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0514>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, p. 558.]

“General Orders, 29 April 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-14-02-0603>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, pp. 670–672.]

“General Orders, 14 May 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-15-02-0114>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 15, May–June 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006, pp. 121–122.]

“General Orders, 31 May 1778,” Founders Online, National Archives, last modified June 13, 2018, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-15-02-0289>. [Original source: The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 15, May–June 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006, p. 280.]

Pvt. Asa Redington of Scammell’s Light Infantry described being sick with smallpox in an army hospital in 1781: “We had a narrow bed sack filled with straw and thrown on the floor for each of us and a small blanket ---- these, with the addition of an old one which we always carried with us in a knapsack, constituted our bedding.”¹³

“The 18th Century Material Culture Resource Center: Military Hygiene, Grooming & Laundry,” Scribd, accessed October 14, 2018, <https://www.scribd.com/document/260315949/Military-Soldier-Hygiene-Grooming-Laundry>.

¹³ Asa Redington, “Short Sketch of [the] Life of Asa Redington” (January 1838), Stanford University Libraries, Department of Special Collections, Misc. 383.

Hospital Appearance:

- They had linen ticking mattresses filled with straw lined up on the ground or an elevated platform, with space between the mattresses for the surgeons or nurses to attend the sick lying on them.
- Patients most likely only wore linen shirts (long, down to thigh) and possibly wool caps. Some would also have wool blankets, though many lacked even that.

Material Culture Items Inside the Hospitals:

- Amputation and surgical sets
- Baskets full of packaging straw and wine/spirits bottles inside
- Baskets full of soiled linens
- Bleeding bowls
- Books
- Brass mortar and pestle, marble mortar and pestle
- Ceramic bowls filled with hot water for washing
- Earthenware gallipots
- Glass jars with apothecary supplies
- Linen ticking mattresses packed with straw
- Miscellaneous medical tools
- Some blankets, though poor supply system meant that many soldiers went without
- Stacks of linen bandages
- Trunks, wooden cases, and leather portmanteau
- Weights with scales
- Wine and spirits bottles

Read Also:

Kathleen M. Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009).

Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2009).

Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1775-1818*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2009), 81-92.

https://history.army.mil/html/books/030/30-7-1/CMH_Pub_30-7-1.pdf

Don N. Hagist, "Apparel Worn by and Goods Issued to Female Followers of American Troops;" Don N. Hagist, "She was very fond of soldiers," *The Brigade Dispatch*, vol. XXIX, no. 2 (Summer 2000), 15-16; Don N. Hagist, "The Women of Fort Jefferson" (goods issued to individuals at a Kentucky fort, 1780-1781), *The Brigade Dispatch*, vol. XXX, no. 1 (Spring 2000), 21-23," ed. John U. Rees, Scribd, accessed October 14, 2018, www.scribd.com/document/214790248/Apparel-Worn-by-and-Goods-Issued-to-Female-Followers-of-American-Troops-Don-N-Hagist-She-was-very-fond-of-soldiers-The-Brigade-Dispatch-vol-XXI.

Nancy K. Loane, *Following the Drum: Women at the Valley Forge Encampment* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2009).

Holly A. Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999).

John U. Rees, "The proportion of Women which ought to be allowed...": An Overview of Continental Army Female Camp Followers." Scribd Inc., accessed October 14, 2018, www.scribd.com/document/255868431/The-proportion-of-Women-which-ought-to-be-allowed-An-Overview-of-Continental-Army-Female-Camp-Followers.